

Citizen's Guide to the Tumwater City Plan 2035



INTRODUCTION

What is the City Plan?

In 1990, Washington State Legislature began to require local agencies to create **“Comprehensive Plans”** as part of the **Growth Management Act**. These comprehensive plans provide the city with an outline on how to manage policy making and investment decisions for the next 20 years. The

“Comprehensive Plan” refers to a long-range plan meant to guide the development and public policy decisions that shape the physical, environmental, economic, and social character of the

Tumwater City Plan examines the topics of land use, housing, lands for public purposes, parks and recreation, conservation, transportation, utilities, economic development, and capital facilities within the time span of 2015 to 2035. To make sure that the daily activities of City Hall are productive and efficient, the City Plan is written to be consistent with all other City, County, and State plans that cover the same topics.

Why write a City Plan?

Aside from it being mandated by the State, there are plenty of benefits that come from writing a long-range planning document. The City Plan:

- Helps provide an opportunity for citizens to become more involved in the goals and policies that guide the City towards the future.
- Gets all the different departments and services on the same page by establishing coordinated policies and programs.
- Provides decision makers with a more comprehensive and long term perspective to guide short term policies and projects to build upon each other to reach the City’s goals.
- Gives prospective citizens and employers an overview of City as it currently is and what it hopes to become.
- Tumwater is expected to have a 70% increase in population (roughly 17,690 new residents) by 2035 so it’s useful to figure out how that will affect the City and figure out where all those people are going to live, work, shop, and learn.

“Development” in the context of this plan refers to new construction of buildings and other structures by either private developers or governing bodies like the City.

What's in the City Plan?

The City Plan looks at the City's current situation in a variety of topics from housing to conservation and uses input from the community to create goals and policies to lead the City in the direction the people want it to go. These goals range from increasing energy efficiency in new developments to maintaining the amount of protected wetlands in the City.

What trends are driving the City Plan?

- Population in Tumwater is projected to grow by over 17,000 people (a 70% increase) by 2035
- Water consumption is increasing even with conservation strategies
- Electricity and gas consumption are projected to increase in all sectors
- Household sizes are getting smaller
- Homes in Tumwater are becoming less affordable
- People are driving less and walking/biking more

How was the community involved?

Tumwater strives to involve the community as much as possible throughout the planning process. Through surveys, coffee talks, and public comment during Council and committee meetings, the staff at City Hall has summarized the City's goals for the future in vision and mission statements as well as four goals.

Vision Statement: The Tumwater of the future will be a people-oriented and highly livable with a strong economy, dynamic places, vibrant neighborhoods, a healthy natural environment, diverse and engaged residents, and a living connection to its history.

Mission Statement: In active partnership with its citizens, the City of Tumwater provides leadership and essential municipal services to cultivate a prosperous economy, a healthy natural environment, vibrant neighborhoods, and supportive social fabric.

Community Goals



1. **Provide more transportation choices**

Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.



2. **Promote equitable, affordable housing**

Expand location and energy efficient housing choices to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.



3. **Enhance economic opportunity**

Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to worksites, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs.



4. **Value communities and neighborhoods**

Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods. Employ strategies like mixed-use development and land recycling to increase community revitalization and efficiency of infrastructure investments.

How is the City Plan put into action?

The Plan recommends amendments to the Tumwater Municipal Code. The Municipal Code holds all of the zoning and subdivision regulations for the City. Anything built within the city limits has to follow the Municipal Code or risk investigation, fines, fees, and other consequences of violating the City's laws and regulations. Also, the Capital Facilities Element of the City Plan has a list of projects intended for funding and completion by the City within the next 6 years.

ELEMENTS OF THE CITY PLAN

Land Use

There is a wide variety of land uses within Tumwater, such as housing, greenbelts, or grocery stores. The Tumwater Municipal Code outlines where each use can be located and what requirements developers and landowners must follow. It's important to carefully consider how land use regulations influence new development so that the city can best support its current and future citizens.

Issues and Opportunities

Projected Population Increase

Tumwater is expecting a 70% increase in population by 2035. If managed properly, this influx of people could give the City an economic boost and create the density and demand necessary to create more efficient services – like more efficient bus routes, for example. With this in mind, the City has proposed a number of policies that encourage dense development to maximize the utility of existing services, utilities, and infrastructure. These policies also balance the goal of density with that of protecting the character of established neighborhoods.

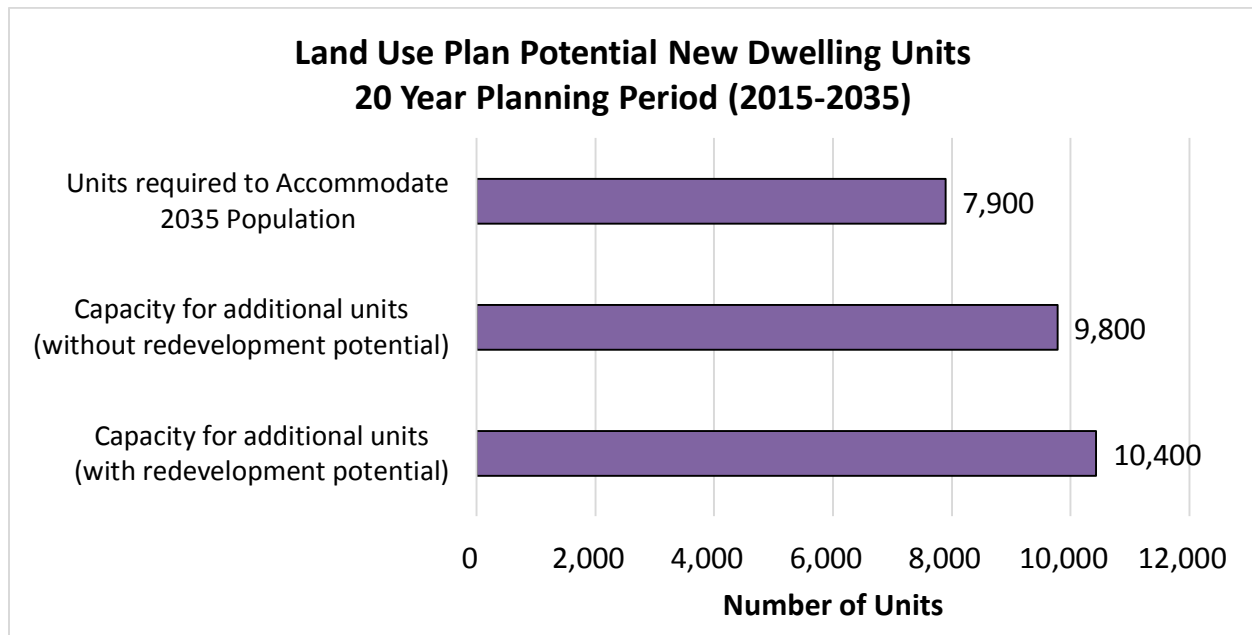
“Density” in the context of this plan means the amount of people within a specified area. This can also refer to the number of buildings within an area.

For example, a density for a project could be 4 dwelling units per acre and Tumwater has a density of about 1,200 people per square mile.

Tumwater and Urban Growth Area 20-Year Population Forecast				
	2015 Population (includes annexed areas)	2035 Population	Population Increase	% Increase 2015-2035
Tumwater	21,940	34,680	12,740	58%
Urban Growth Area	3,250	8,200	4,950	152%
Combined Areas	25,190	42,880	17,690	70%

Increased Need for Housing

To accommodate the estimated 2035 population, Tumwater will have to create approximately 7,900 new dwelling units. There is currently enough land in the City to build these units but there is increased capacity if the City and developers turn towards redevelopment of preexisting buildings.



Implementation Strategies

- Encourage Mixed Use buildings to increase density and walkability
- Support new developments or redevelopments that happen in or close to the City center
- Enforce the new Design Guidelines to encourage new developments to be more people oriented
- Encourage innovative design techniques that support more affordable and diverse housing types
- Invest in public improvements to streets and other public spaces

“Walkability” refers to how easy it is to live in a certain area with walking as your main transportation method. A highly walkable place has grocery stores, entertainment, restaurants, and other businesses within an area that can be covered in a 20-minute walk.

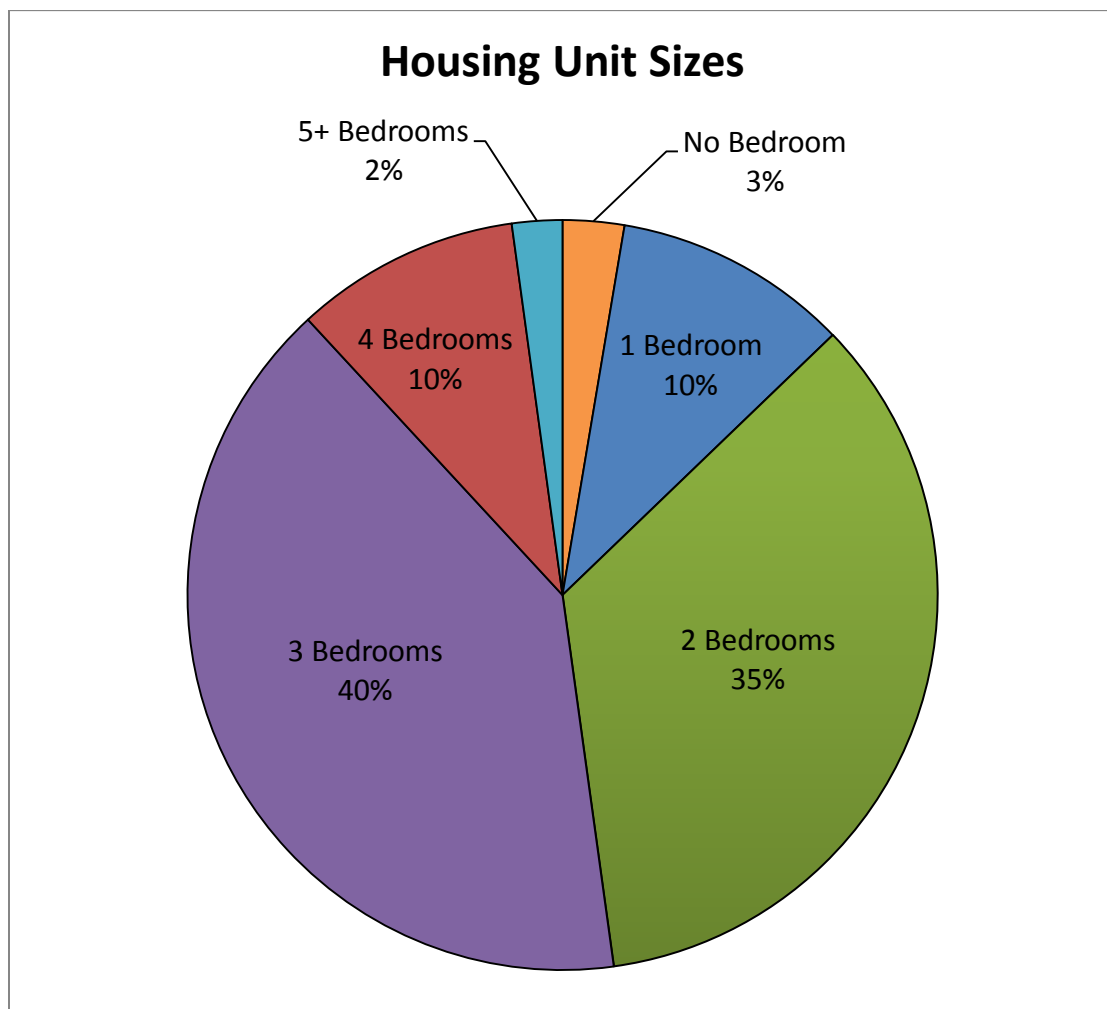
Housing

Housing one of the most impactful topics on Tumwater citizens' everyday lives. It is a top priority of the City that residents have a range of housing options within their budget so that they are living in a home that suits their needs without putting undue strain upon their income.

Issues and Opportunities

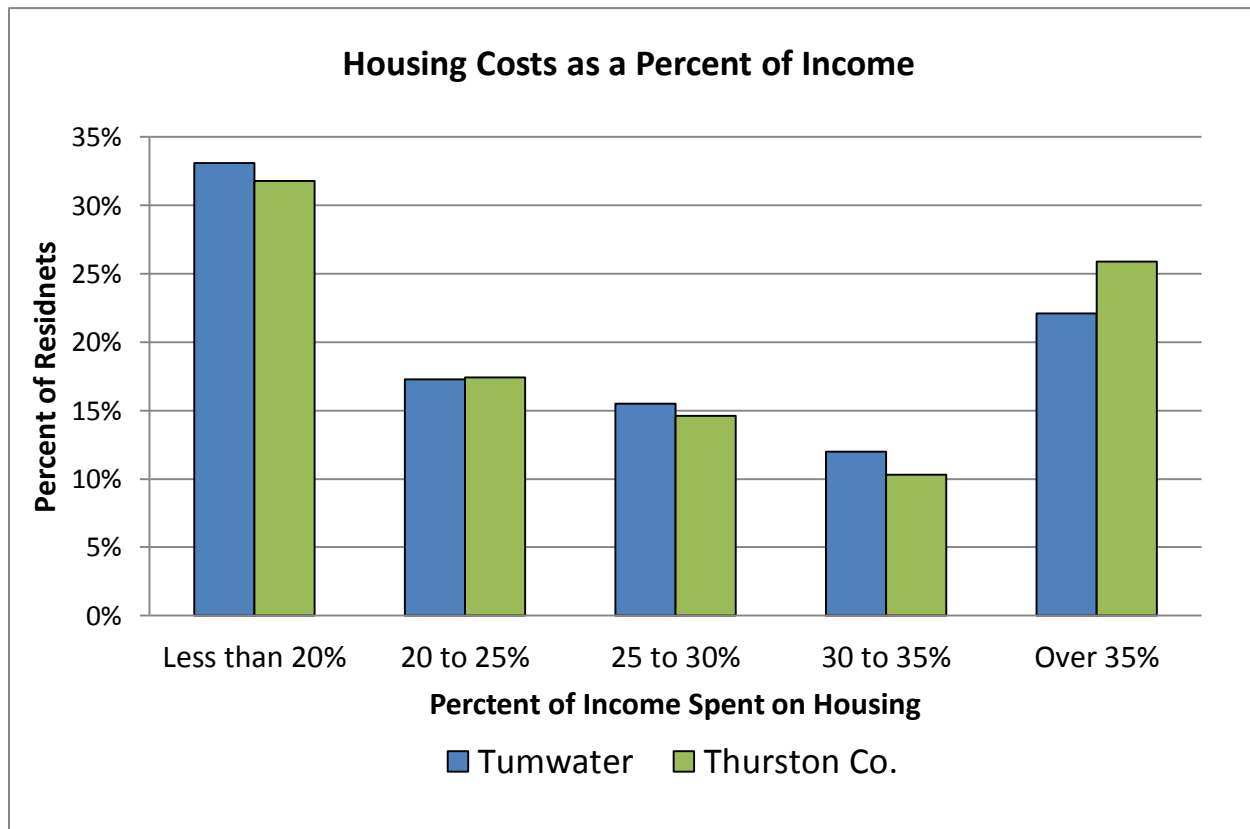
Household Sizes

Most housing units in the City have been designed for single families that need three or more bedrooms. While this works well for the many families living in Tumwater, housing trends around the nation have shown that households are shrinking in size. More and more people are living by themselves or with a partner, but without children. Single homes and large apartments aren't a good financial option for childless couples or single person households.



Affordable Housing

While most of Tumwater has stayed relatively affordable, 22% of the City's population is rent burdened, meaning they spend over a third of their income on housing costs. This limits the amount they can use to cover other costs of living like food or health care. This trend is predicted to continue as the City grows unless changes are made the current housing stock.



Homelessness

The local homeless population has been estimated by Thurston County to be somewhere around 476 people that are either living outdoors, in shelters, or in transitional housing. Within the Tumwater School District, there is an estimated 246 homeless students and that number is considered to underestimated due to the stigma surrounding homelessness. The local shelter organizations are beyond capacity night after night. They are in need of increased funding or additional services to help address the critical needs of Tumwater's less fortunate population. Tumwater already has about 50 transitional housing units but more can and should always be done.

Implementation Strategies

- Identify rarely used building strategies that can reduce the cost of development and encourage creating affordable housing
- Provide a greater mix of housing styles and sizes to provide an affordable selection of housing to all of Tumwater's residents
- Create new housing units to meet the needs of the City's future population while also maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods
- Continue the discussion on how to best help the homeless population in Tumwater with strategies like building transitional housing
- Encourage housing to be near transportation hubs, jobs, and other daily activities

Lands for Public Purposes

Public services and utilities require careful planning to make sure they are placed or distributed in the most efficient manner possible. Tumwater aims to balance the goals of serving the greatest amount of people with the highest quality service while maintaining the lowest possible operating costs.

Issues and Opportunities

Waste Management

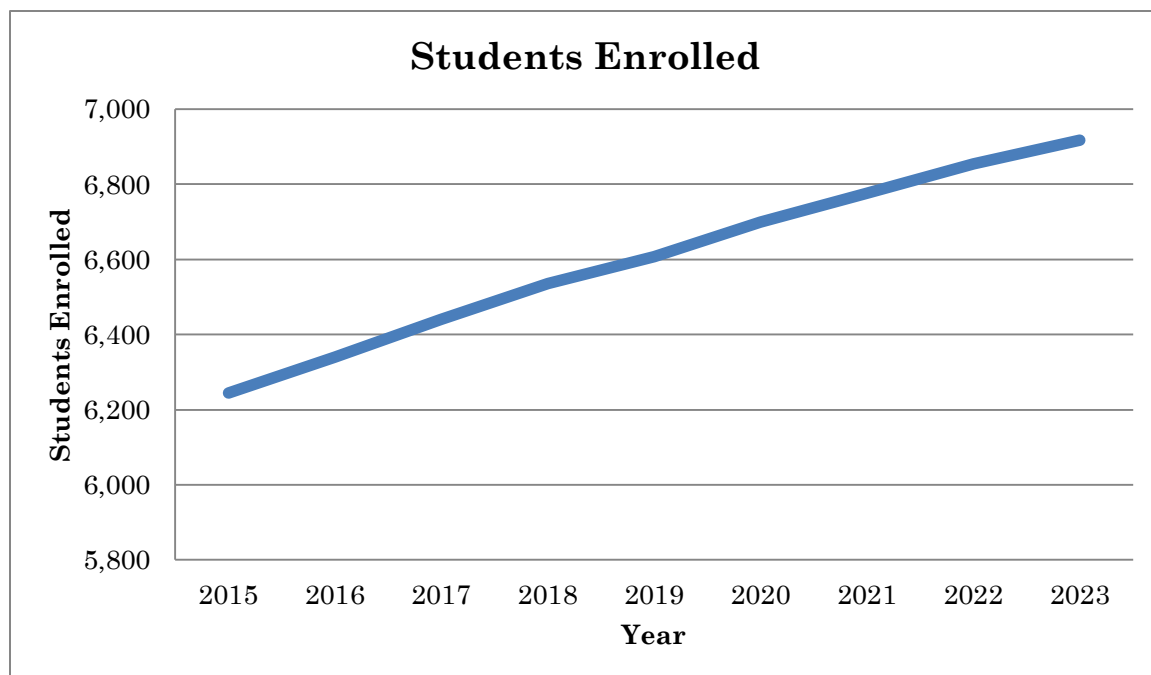
Solid waste in Tumwater is taken to the Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center (WARC). While the WARC is functioning fine at the moment, some of its facilities are beginning to wear down. The HazoHouse, the hazardous materials drop-off center, is in need of a replacement in the near future. Slightly further out, there may be need for an entirely new WARC as Tumwater and the County grow.

Reduce, Re-use, Recycle

The WARC receives about 550 tons of waste per day, only 4 tons of that being recyclables. As solid waste landfills are a big contributor of greenhouse gas emissions and Washington State is trying to reduce those emissions, Tumwater should do its part to increase recycling efforts.

School District

With the current population projections, the Tumwater School District is expected to gain about 670 new students by 2023. To accommodate the incoming student population, the City of Tumwater should help the School District pick out sites for new schools and other facilities.



Implementation Strategies

- Work with the County to develop a new HazoHouse Facility and other facilities
- Provide assistance to residents to dramatically increase recycling and re-use
- Support green economic opportunities to build local markets, jobs, and firms in recycling, re-use, and related material management efforts
- Encourage innovative and alternative technologies for converting municipal solid waste to energy or fuel
- Coordinate with the Olympia and Tumwater School Districts to plan for the future need for new school facilities



Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Parks and open spaces have a huge impact on life within Tumwater. They provide recreation, social, and educational opportunities to both residents and tourists with the added bonus of preserving green space in the city.

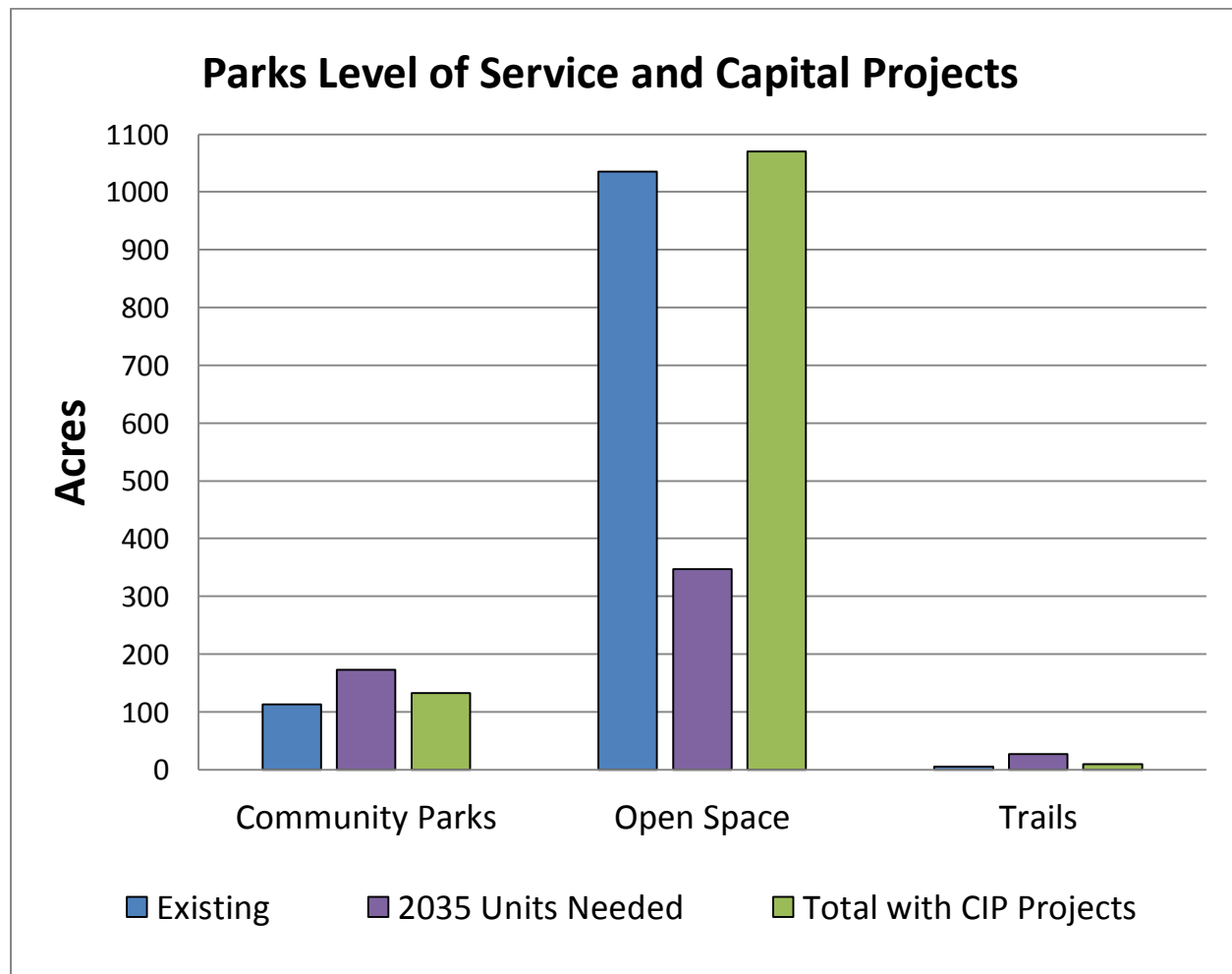
Issues and Opportunities

Community Parks

According to projections, Tumwater will be short on the amount of community parks to meet the needs of the 2035 population increase.

Trails

Tumwater is looking to create a network of trails for bikers and pedestrians to cross the City. Currently, the Parks Department is designing and constructing these trails, section by section, as funding allows. The City will also be coming up short on trails for 2035.



Parks and Open Space in each Neighborhood		
Neighborhood/ Planning District	Parks (Acres)	Open Space (Acres)
Airport	25	0
Brewery	97	31
Bush Prairie	344	2
Deschutes	278	37
Littlerock	20	82
Mottman	0	14
New Market	0	0
SE Captiol Boulevard	3	9
SW Tumwater	0	33
Trosper	1	32
Tumwater Hill	45	90
Total	813	330

Implementation Strategies

- Create a citywide system of streetscapes, parkways, and gateways that access and highlight the scenic attributes of Tumwater
- Create a comprehensive system of on and off-road hike and bike trails that access scenic, environmental, historical, and open space attributes of Tumwater

Conservation

Tumwater takes a great deal of pride in the preservation of its natural assets from trees to wetlands. It has made the City more attractive and enjoyable to visitors and residents alike. With an undeniable population increase on the horizon, the City will have to find a way to strike a balance between increasing the City's capacity and retaining an acceptable quality and quantity of natural resources.

Issues and Opportunities

Water Resources

The City of Tumwater has long since been heavily invested in the quality of its water. In order to maintain the level of quality that has made Tumwater famous, the City must take action to protect the groundwater and surface water sources from the impacts of new construction and higher usage.

Wetland Protection

Wetlands have an array of benefits such as filtering stormwater runoff and providing habitat for local wildlife. Preventing and mitigating wetland loss is highly important for the preservation of water quality and regional biodiversity.

Local Food Production

Historically, valuable agricultural lands have been pushed out and eliminated by low-density sprawl located outside the urban sections of cities. Tumwater should seek to prevent this trend from occurring and preserve farmlands for increasing the availability of locally produced food to the City.

Implementation Strategies

- Monitor and review zoning so that hazardous uses can't locate next to sensitive natural areas
- Enforce low-impact development regulations and other ordinances that protect critical areas
- Offer incentives to become more water and energy efficient like rebates for high efficiency fixtures and retrofits
- Educate the public on best sustainable practices through outreach events and programs
- Support dense development in the urban core
- Implement a septic to sewer program
- Stay up-to-date on natural resource lands classifications to ensure that critical areas are getting the protection they need

Transportation

Transportation is an important aspect of daily life. How people are able to move within Tumwater impacts how the City will grow and what shape that growth will take as the City transitions to a more urban place.

Issues and Opportunities

Walkability

Walkability is a measure of how easy it is to live in an area without a car. Factors like sidewalk conditions and nearby grocery stores come together to create a “walkscore,” or grade for an area. Tumwater’s walkscore is 28. This signifies a car-dependent transportation environment. By improving its non-motorized transportation system, Tumwater can become friendlier to residents and tourists who choose not to own cars for financial, environmental, or other reasons and boost its quality of life measurement.

Multi-Modal Transit

To support the additional trips traveled by the incoming population, Tumwater has to create and expand the City’s multi-modal transit network. Multi-modal transportation takes into account all the different ways people get around—from walking and biking to busing and driving. As Tumwater’s Town Center transitions into a more urban area, the roadways should reflect the variety of transit modes.



Rural



Urban





Safety

For the City to switch to multi-modal transit, Tumwater must first address the issue of safety. There are a number of lanes in the City that are too narrow for bikes and cars to share creating a dangerous and frustrating environment for both. And even though the lanes are narrow, some streets have too many of them and not enough crossing opportunities for pedestrians, thereby encouraging them to jaywalk. There is also some indication of a lack of accommodations for people with disabilities and temporary mobility issues.

Current Transportation Inventory	
Infrastructure Type	Quantity
Public Streets/Roads	140 miles
Owned by the City	100 miles
To be added	15-20 miles
Bus System	6 major routes (12, 13, 42, 43, 68, 609)
Trails	5 miles
Sidewalks	104 miles
Bike Lanes	11.5 miles
Airport Facilities	835 acres

Implementation Strategies

- Adopt land use based street design guidance
- Adopt multi-modal Level of Service standards
- Expand bicycle and pedestrian data collection
- Establish bicycle and pedestrian advisory body
- Conduct a local traffic safety campaign
- Identify and prioritize projects or areas of improvement

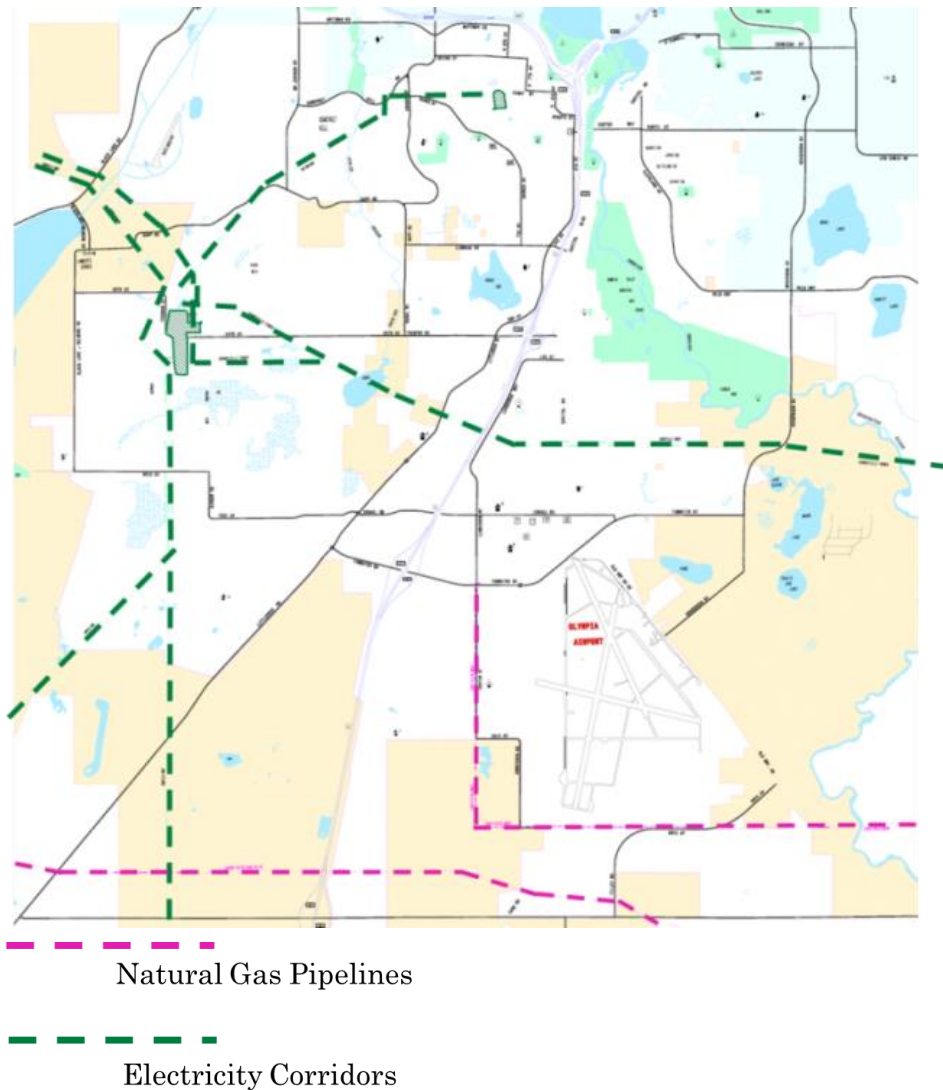
Utilities

Utilities in Tumwater, with the exception of water services, are provided through private companies that work closely with the City. Tumwater can't directly affect pricing or distribution of most utilities, but the City can create incentives to increase efficiency and create opportunities to expand utilities.

Issues and Opportunities

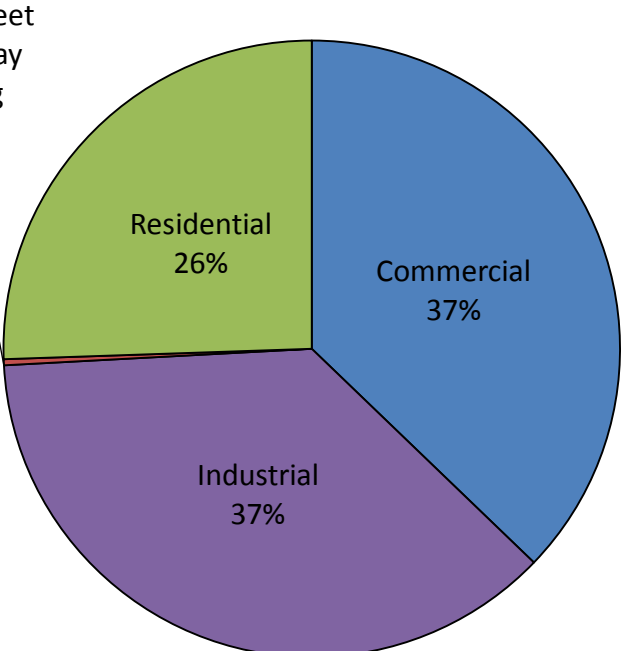
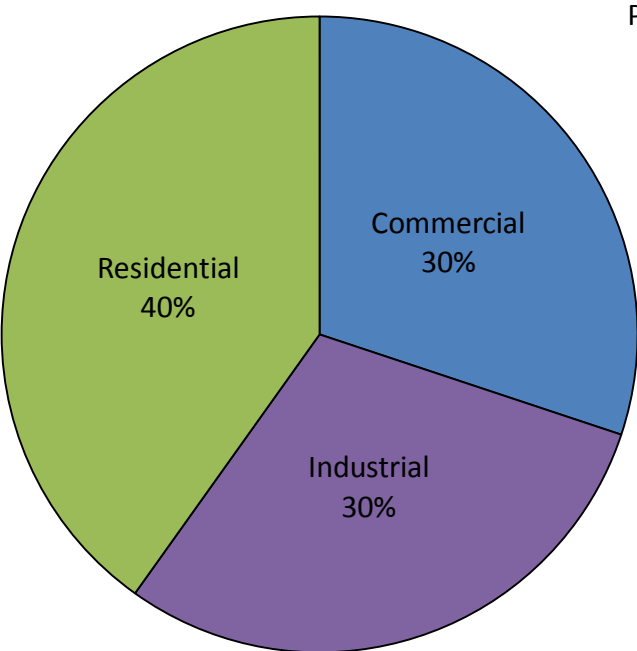
Natural Gas and Electricity

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) provides natural gas and electricity to Tumwater and a large portion of the Puget Sound region. PSE is currently meeting Tumwater's gas and electricity needs and will work with the City to provide for the future population increase.

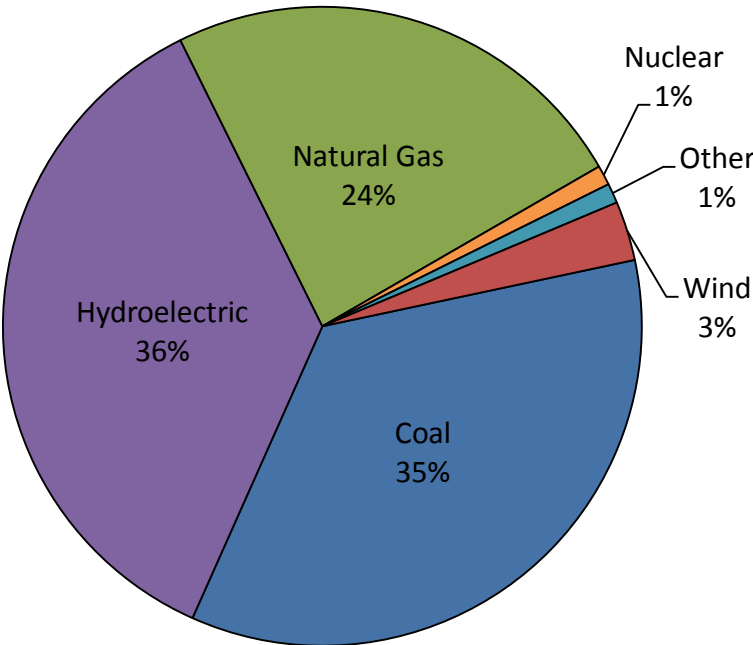


Natural Gas Usage by Sector

Electricity Usage by Sector

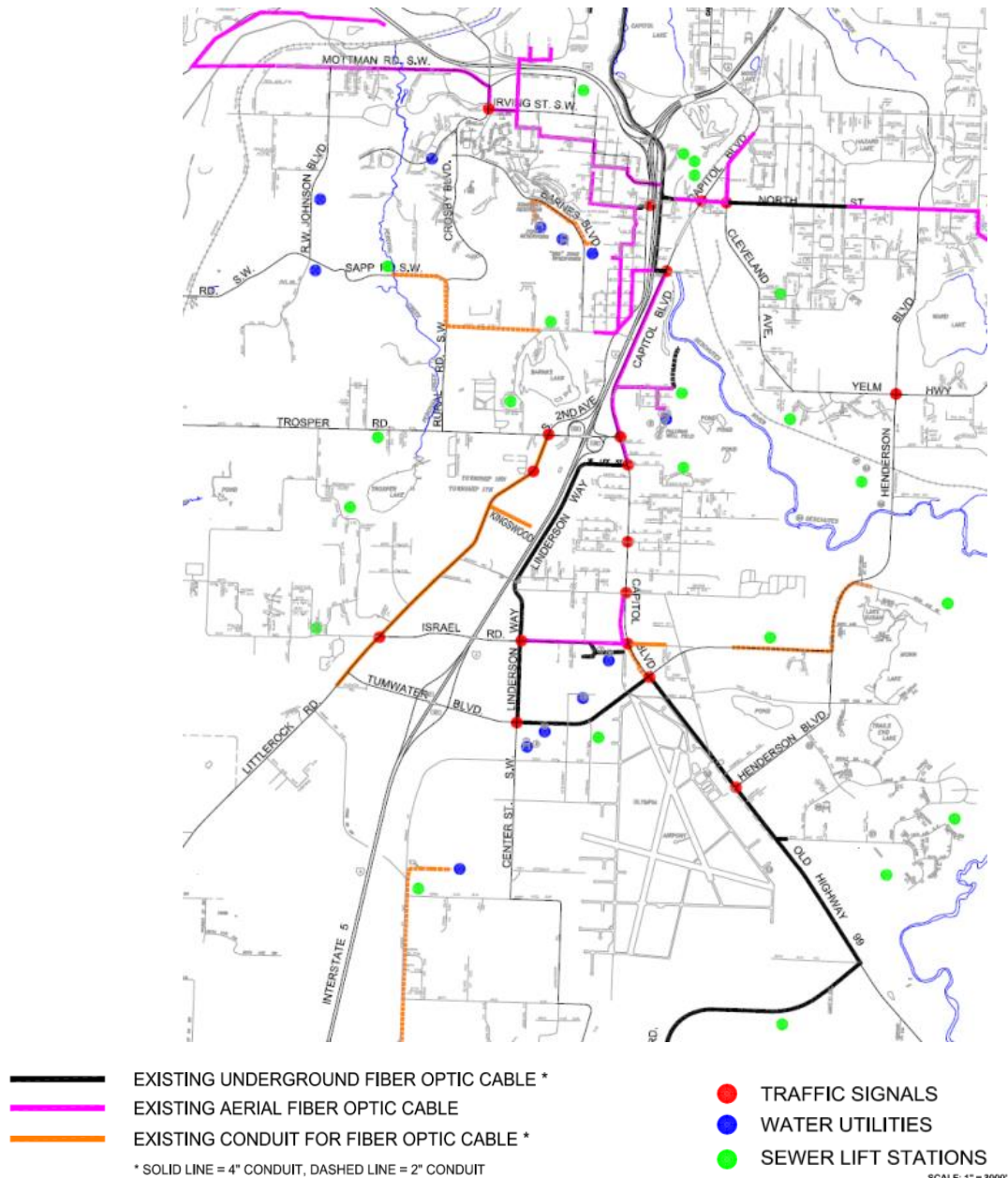


Electricity Sources



Telecommunication

Telecommunication utilities such as broadband internet, television, and telephone services are vital to businesses and attractive to residents. There are a number of companies that provide these services to Tumwater, the most prominent are Comcast, Centurylink, and HughesNet. While current demand is being met, the City should consider opportunities to expand telecommunication services with new strategies like expanding the fiber optic network.



Implementation Strategies

- Require that private utility companies communicate with the City when siting new utilities
- Increase the use of renewable resources to reduce the region's carbon footprint
- Enhance the region's electricity distribution, monitoring, and storage infrastructure to support adoption of cleaner technologies and practices
- Encourage energy efficiency and conservation through incentives and policy changes

Economic Development

While the City can't directly improve economic conditions of Tumwater, there are certain strategies and policy decisions that can be made to make Tumwater more attractive to new businesses and further support the ones that are already in the City.

Issues and Opportunities

Supporting Businesses

An important step in building a stronger local economy is to retain the City's existing businesses. Engaging with the businesses of Tumwater will give the City a good idea of how to better support its current and future businesses.

Tumwater's Image and Future

To draw in new businesses and workers, Tumwater should focus on marketing the City as a desirable place to live and favorable environment to start or expand a business in. The City can also take advantage of its brewing history to draw in brewing and associated businesses.

Neighborhood Plans and Neighborhood Centers

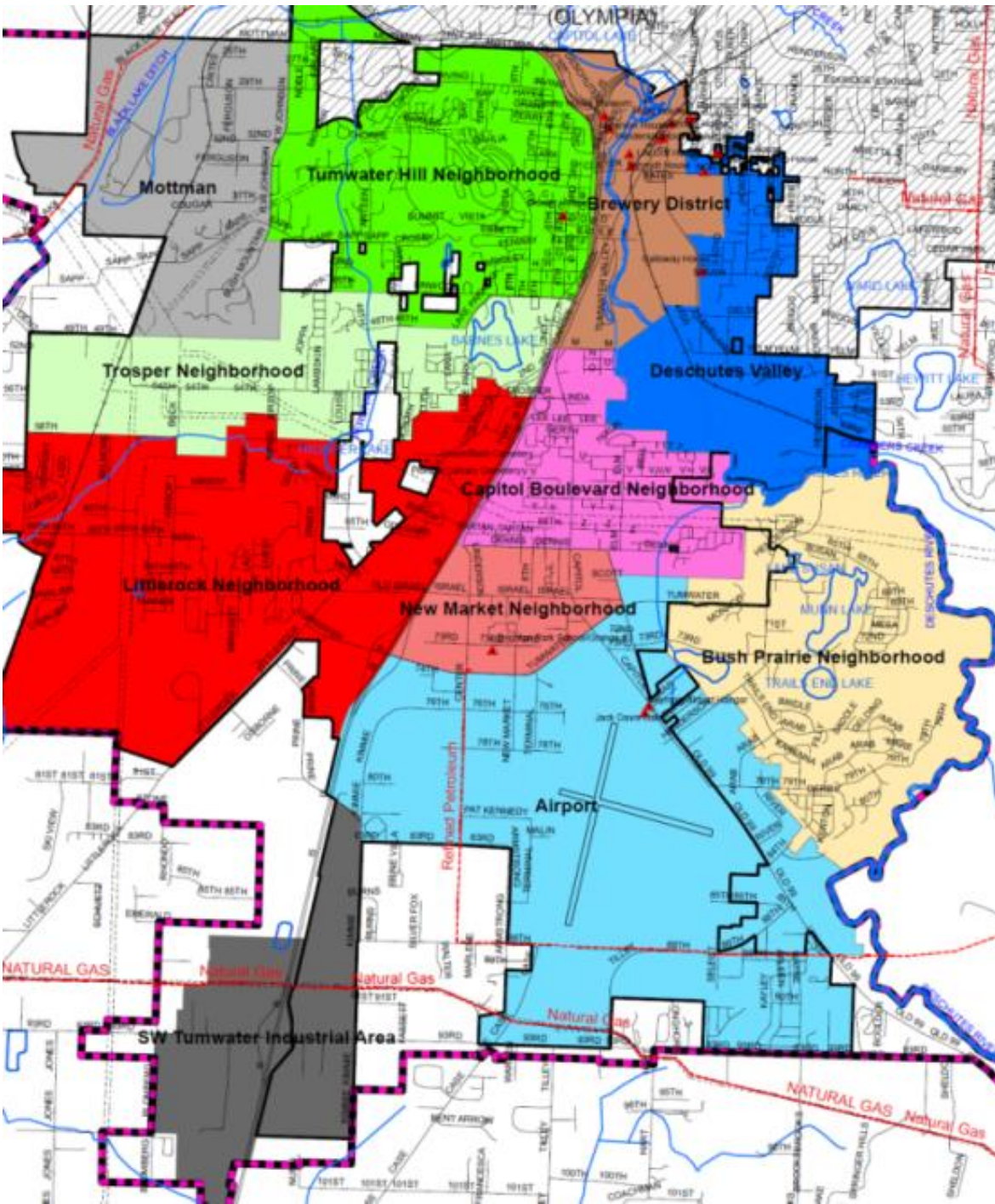
Neighborhood or sub-area plans are similar to the City Plan but on a smaller scale. Smaller plans allow for greater detail and citizen participation. Implementing and monitoring these plans helps to utilize the individual characteristics of each neighborhood.

Implementation Strategies

- Promote Tumwater as an attractive place to visit, live, and work
- Communicate with businesses to identify their needs and ways for the City to meet them
- Stabilize and redevelop the Old Brewhouse and other brewery properties
- Continue to implement and review neighborhood plans



Map of Tumwater Neighborhood Areas



Capital Facilities

Prioritization

With the City's limited resources, Tumwater leaders must prioritize projects. Here is the list of criteria used in the process of ranking most important to least:

- Is it an emergency repair?
- Is the City required by law to do it?
- Is it a project from past years that is still being carried out?
- Does it support or implement the City's goals and objectives?
- Can it get outside funding?
- Is it an enhancement or repair of an existing facility?
- Does it involve the acquisition and development of new facilities?

Funding

The funding for capital facilities projects comes from a variety of sources such as grants, loans, and money generated from City taxes. It's important that the Capital Facilities Plan explore seeking funding from as many sources as possible so that the City can improve at a faster rate.

Implementation Strategy

Capital Facilities Budget		
Type of Project	Total Projects	Total Cost
General Governmental	31	\$39,094,240
Transportation	25	\$30,845,957
Water	21	\$24,221,500
Sanitary Sewer	12	\$8,365,000
Storm Drain	23	\$4,919,500